[Copy - to Rev. Dr. Bannett - Boston.]

Leicester, July 7. 1847.

My Dear Sir,

Since I have returned home, ~~to the~~ to the wonted ~~quietness~~ quietness of the country my thoughts have reverted to the ~~enquiries you~~ brief conversation we had together ~~made of me~~ touching the Irish Unitarian Letter, &c. & which, ~~during the interval~~ since that time, has been quite crowded out of my mind by the pressure of occupations wholly new to me. I have ~~wonder at myself, on account of the imperfect answer I made to you~~ find cause to regret that my answer to one of your inquiries was imperfect. I can only say, that ~~I cannot blame myself, for~~ I did my best at the time to answer you correctly; but it is my not infrequent misfortune to think of an important matter some time after the moment when it was needed.

I have no correction to make in my statement of matters in the history of the transmission to this country of certain documents from the Irish Unitarians. It is true that the first document was ~~transmitted~~ sent to you in the Summer of 1843, and was soon made public by you in the columns of the "Christian Reprint". It is also, ~~as~~ true that the next document, from the same source, came to this country early in 1846, entitled an "Address of the Irish Unit". Soc. Society to their Brethren in America." This was sent to me, under cover of a letter

from Mr. James Haughton of Dublin, dated Feb 2. 1846. This address I caused to be published in the Register & World, and also in a tract form. I also ~~have taken~~ took pains to have an acknowledgement of its reception, and a reply to it, sent from this country. Through many difficulties and much opposition, I succeeded in getting a Committee appointed, in May 1846, to draft & send a Reply. For reasons, which it is not necessary I should ~~not~~ now stop to explain, no ~~answer has~~ reply has yet gone; but new measures, and I think effectual ~~Measures~~, were taken last May to discharge this long-delayed duty.

You did me the honour to ask my opinion with reference to the charge made at the late meeting of the I. N. C. Society ~~I thought you had no way of~~ ~~been deficient~~ in Courtesy, ~~or Charged against you,~~ that you had been wanting in respect to the ~~Past~~ letters from Slaves to America. You will allow, Sir, it was a delicate & difficult question, as put by you to me, considering our respective ages and positions. Still, I meant & wished to answer it truly. I feel that ~~I did~~ my answer did not fully express my thought about it; while I am, still very far from thinking that you were intentionally or consciously wanting in courtesy to the Irish brethren. But I have ~~felt~~ thought, and do think, that the Irish Unit^n. had a right to expect that you would take ~~some steps in~~ measures to procure a Reply to their letter of 1843. To whom else, but to you, should they look?

(which was, in effect, that you had done all that courtesy could require of you)

No one else I think, would feel called upon to move in the matter, but you, to whom the Letter was sent, did not. Permit me, with all respect, to add, that I have regretted & still regret that you did not take some measures to obtain an answer to that letter. You will perceive that in the 2d communication - the address of 1846 - they make this a ground of complaint in their "address" "With regard to the delay in Replying to this last address, you are not in the least responsible for it.

I do not know, of course, but that excited circumstance, with regard to the Peace Address of the British Minister last year, which made that case entirely unlike that of the Irish Letter of 1843, is in 1843. To me however, I confess, there seems an essential similarity between them. The Peace Address, to the Amer. Minister, was sent to your care. You not only made it public in the prints, but effectually interested yourself to have a suitable acknowledgement & reply made. You brought it before a body to which it was not distinctly addressed; no one made any objection to that course, for it was obviously a proper one, under the circumstances; its because there was an entire propriety in your course; while a similar attempt on my part, to indeed a few months 5½ weeks previously, to induce the a.u.a. to provide for answering the Irish Address was rejected and defeated, in their "Brethren in America" on the ground that the "Address" was not specifically made to the A.U.A! The different course, pursued in the two cases,

wounded me deeply, and I gave on the spot some expression to my feelings, which however met more frowns than sympathy. — But to return — my Dear Sir Had you been

Dear Sir, I have never called in question your conscientiousness or courtesy. I am perfectly certain you have ever aimed to be true in both. Differing with you so widely, as I do and must, I can yet honour and respect you. And yet I do not the less wish that you had looked, in past years, on many things & many persons, with different eyes. Future than those are

pleased to make a similar effort, in 184, to procure a Reply to the Letter of the Irish Unitarian, in 184, or even to some measures to that end, I believe our Dublin friends would never have complained of a want of courtesy on our part. I wish to say distinctly, however that I do not attribute your not doing so to any want of courteous feeling to the authors of the letter. You doubtless had reasons for your course entirely satisfactory to yourself.

I have felt that the above explanation was due to myself. Though it may reach you too late to answer all the purposes you had in view in seeking our late conversation. If I have been the means of leading you to make any erroneous statement to others, on me the blame must fall, and I shall feel it to be my duty to extend to them the above explanation, or learn from you that a necessity for it exists. Believe me to be, with respect

Yours &c. — H — J —

(Signed)

To Rev. E. S. Gannett, D.D.

of the Unitarian body; and of these, for the most part, for I am proud to acknowledge the service which some of the most prominent among living Unitarians have rendered to the anti-Slavery cause. I am satisfied with my statement as a correct one. Is it not perfectly notorious, to all who are acquainted with the history of Unitarian proceedings on this subject, that every effort made to array the influence of the Unitarian body against Slavery has been met with the sturdiest and most vehement hostility from nearly all those who occupy the "high places" of "influence" in the body? For one, I know, to my cost, that this has been the case. In 1844 it was so; it was so again in 1845; in 1846; and in 1847. The remark was general that every advance which the Unitarian body made, with regard to Slavery, was in direct opposition to the efforts of those who had been long accustomed to mould & shape the denominational action as they listed. It was so, beyond the possibility of controversy. All the more honor therefore, to those who struggled against the avowed and unrelenting determination of some of these men that the denomination should utter no opinion, and put forth no action, against Slavery. That honor, so far as it is due, I would gladly render. But the very fact of the difficulty & long-protracted contests of those years, simply to obtain a Christian testimony against Slavery in the different Unitarian Associations,

of the Mountain Men; and of these, in the west
part, [redacted] was a prominent [redacted] Mountaineer. Here we closed our
[redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [

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incontrovertibly proves all I have said of the coldness & indifference of those, for the most parts, who occupy the prominent positions, and exercise the leading influence in the Unitarian body. Even now, one of these gentlemen, (whose position as to influence is second to that of none other) by his own showing, stands up in the City of Washington and says to a congregation in that Slaveholding city that there is no abolitionism And he might as well have said, for the practical effect of his discourse on the audience, and throughout that community that the Gospel does not condemn Slavery. And as if this were not enough, he ~~must~~ takes up the language of a venal party press, and stigmatizes, as "anti-government radicalism", the efforts of individuals who honestly desire (he admits their conscientiousness) and patiently labour that God's rightful government over men may no longer be set aside - as it openly is now - by iniquitous and tyrannical human enactments. If it were really true that these individuals were so mistaken and so ~~fanat~~ fanatical, ~~how~~ why have not these eloquent & learned preachers shown to them "a more excellent way" of anti-Slavery effort? Their superior numbers, their favorable positions for influence, everything would have conspired to make them leaders in the cause; and the follies & extravagancy

But the testimony of the New York Evangelist is adduced in proof of the high ground the Unitarians have ever taken against Slavery. The praise of the Evangelist is generous; ~~and free~~ It is based on the fact of the ~~action~~ Anti-slavery action in successive years of Unitarians, and as compared with other bodies. But it does not

of the rest would have ~~been~~ been obscured & forgotten. But not so; to treat with studied neglect the whole subject, & to inveigh against the aggressions of the Abolitionists, has been the chosen work of those, from whom we had a right to expect the cheering call of onward, ~~[illegible]~~, and who ought to have been teachers & leaders of their humbler brethren in the contest against the national iniquity and oppression.

When those who take the place of moral & religious teachers of a people - to whom therefore we ~~have a right to look~~ necessarily look for the truest counsels & example, who are bound to unfold the whole counsel of God, - when such ask us to be silent, and to refrain from action, on such a matter as Slavery is, and who themselves set the example using all their efforts to suppress popular feeling

[illegible] of the age, and obeying the manifest teachings of the providence of God.

[redacted]

But the testimony of the New York Evangelist is adduced in proof of the high ground the Unitarians have ever taken against Slavery. The praise of the Evangelist is generous; ~~and free~~ It is based on the fact of the ~~action~~ anti-slavery action in successive years of Unitarians, and as compared with other bodies. But it does not know how ~~to~~ steadily all that action has been resisted; it does not know how ~~nearly that~~ ban unanimity was secured on the subject, we cannot choose but withhold from them our confidence. It is our duty to expose their unfaithfulness, lest many perish through their ~~sin~~ counsels. They are "blind leaders", and we must not follow such, unless we too would fall into the same ditch where they grope in darkness. If this be arrogance, ~~if it be~~ it is such as they must ever be guilty of, who feel that, whatever else they deny themselves, they must enjoy the luxury of a consciences of their own.

I regret this controversy. I am not fitted for it. I am sorry the necessity for it ever existed, or that any, the humblest, part of the duty of engaging in it fell upon me. I wish the occasion for it were removed; and that Unitarians would profess Christian body, ~~and~~ meeting the demands of and rightful expectations of the age, and obeying the manifest teachings of the providence of God.

give themselves, unitedly, to the ~~work~~ whole work of the Gospel, contending for righteousness, temperance, peace, freedom, yes for humanity, and not for sect. No denomination is less trammeled; none more imperatively called to the high & glorious work. But if they refuse it, it needs no prophet to foresee their speedy overthrow.

I stop, because my communication is already sufficiently long. If my position is called in question, I am ready to give the proof of its truth. I have not misrepresented aught to ~~of~~ our English brethren. If I could not rightfully ask & receive their help, and in return give my own, to promote all Christian influences & principles, I should be compelled to abjure the faith ~~of~~ that Christ has taught us.

But the testimony of the New York Evangelist is adduced in proof of the high ground the Unitarians have ever taken against Slavery. The praise of the Evangelist is generous; ~~and free~~ It is based on the fact of the ~~action~~ anti-slavery action in successive years of Unitarians, and as compared with other bodies. But it does not know how ~~to~~ steadily all that action has been resisted; it does not know how far ~~much that~~ unanimity was secured ~~obtained~~, in the final action, by the withdrawal of the opponents from the scene of debate. Its praise is more honorable to itself than to us. Yet the writer in the Register claims honor to Unitarians for the passage of resolutions, for the bare introduction of which their author was denounced as a disturber of the harmony of the body, ~~and made to feel that his presence would be a forfeiture~~ with other grievous charges which shall now be forborne. It would be better for us not to compare ourselves with others, but to inquire how far we are fulfilling the duties ~~and~~ of a professed Christian body, ~~and~~ meeting the demands of and rightful expectations of the age, and obeying the manifest teachings of the providence of God.

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Miss Sam.l May &c

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